

GO Boulder - Pedestrian Crossing FAQs

Last Updated Monday, 15 June 2009

```
var so = new SWFObject("flash/departments/GOBoulder/walkbanner2.swf", "mymovie", "590", "166", "0", "#000000");
so.addParam("wmode", "transparent");
so.write("flashcontent");
```

Pedestrian Crossing FAQs

Q: Where should a motorist stop to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in a crosswalk?

A: Some pedestrians crossing treatments have a "Yield Line" with a sign stating "Yield here to Pedestrians." Motorists are expected to stop at or before that line. If these signs and markings are not present, then the motorist should stop to yield prior to the crosswalk markings.

Q: What rules are important for pedestrians and drivers to know about crossing in a crosswalk?

A: State law requires:

- 1. That pedestrians give vehicles the opportunity to stop before entering a crosswalk
- 2. That vehicles yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk. NOTE: A bicyclist is afforded the same rights as a pedestrian in a crosswalk when the bicyclist enters the crosswalk at walking speed.

Q: Are these rules different for cyclists?

A: When using a crosswalk, cyclists are considered pedestrians and have the same rights and responsibilities as a pedestrian, as long as they enter the crosswalk at a pedestrian speed (on or off their bikes).

Q: How can I find out more on the Colorado Statutes and local codes?

Visit: [Bicycle in Crosswalk Code](#), the code for [Yield to Pedestrian Required](#) and [Operation of bicycles and other human-powered vehicles](#), Colorado Statute for answers to many typically asked questions.

Q: Why does the city of Boulder use pedestrian-actuated flashing signs (flashing yellow crosswalk signs)?

A: Pedestrian-actuated flashing signs are used primarily on multi-lane roadways where one car may shield the view of a pedestrian from another car approaching in the neighboring lane. The flashing yellow lights advise drivers to slow down and prepare to stop for possible crosswalk users even if they can't see ahead of the cars in the neighboring lane.

Vehicles are always required to yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk whether there are flashing signs or not. The flashing signs are intended to provide additional warning to drivers that a pedestrian is present.

Studies have shown that these enhancements substantially increase the compliance of vehicles yielding to pedestrians and enable pedestrians to cross more quickly.

Q: Do I have to stop for the flashing yellow lights even if there is clearly no one in the crosswalk? (For example, the pedestrian has already crossed and the lights are still flashing.)

A: State law requires that you yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. It does not require that you stop for a flashing yellow sign. If there are no pedestrians that you would impede by proceeding, then you may proceed. The flashing yellow lights are just another way to catch motorists' attention to the possibility of a pedestrian.

Q: Why are the flashing lights yellow and not red?

A: A flashing yellow light means "warning." A flashing red light means "stop your vehicle." State law requires that vehicles yield to pedestrians, and it requires that pedestrians give vehicles the opportunity to do so before entering the crosswalk. Flashing yellow lights do not change or augment these legal requirements. A flashing red light would change this by legally requiring motorists to stop, whether pedestrians were present or not.

In addition, it would not be appropriate to introduce a red light (and the legal requirement to stop at that red light) without any warning. That is why traffic signals have a short yellow light before the red light appears. If the city were to use red lights in this situation, it would require that there also be yellow warning lights prior to the red. Essentially, the device would become a traffic signal.

Q: Is Boulder the only place that uses the flashing yellow crosswalk signs?

A: Flashing yellow lights have been used with pedestrian crossing signs in communities across the country. Communities using the same approach as Boulder (embedding the flashing lights in the sign itself) include Estes Park and Louisville. Other communities, like Lafayette and Broomfield, use flashing yellow lights on top of their pedestrian signs.

Q: I experienced an "almost accident," "near miss" or "close call" with another motorist/cyclist/pedestrian. Is there someone I can report my close call to?

A: The city likes to track close calls to determine if more outreach is necessary in certain areas of the city, at certain types of pedestrian crosswalk treatments or for specific types of conflicts. Use the Close Call Report Form to share your "almost accident." Of course, if you actually had an accident where physical contact was made in one form or another, please report that to the Police Department. For emergencies, Dial 911. For non-emergencies, call 303-441-3333.

If you have a question that is not on this page, call the City's Transportation Operations Engineer at 303-441-3266.